

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method for electronically publishing a buyer's requirements in an electronic publication that provides vendors with information needed to do business with the buyer and that can create individual lines of communication between the buyer and the vendors, wherein the method reduces an amount of paperwork and time required for the buyer to conduct business transactions with the vendors over traditional methods, the present method comprising the steps of:

categorizing the buyer's requirements into categories that are easily recognizable to the vendors, wherein each category includes one or more items required by the buyer, and further wherein an item is a product or service required by the buyer;

electronically publishing the buyer's requirements, wherein each item within the categories includes a name, a description, a contact person and one or more relevant dates, wherein a name of the contact person is presented as a hyperlink to an e-mail account of the contact person;

posting all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the buyer, including requests for information, quotes and proposals, in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of an edited form to the buyer electronically; and,

creating a registration section that allows the vendors to register with the buyer, wherein after registration the vendors can receive electronic notifications concerning any item specified by the vendors during registration; wherein the buyer's requirements, the forms and information necessary to conduct

business with the buyer, and the registration section are included in the electronic publication.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic publication is accessible to the buyer and the vendors and further comprising the step of:

updating the description of an item and the forms necessary for the vendors, by the buyer at any time.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

posting to the publication drawings, figures and pictures for viewing and possible downloading by the vendors, wherein the drawings, figures and pictures aid in conveying the buyer's requirements to the vendors.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the categories of the buyer's requirements include construction, services and supplies.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic notification received by vendors that registered with the buyer comprises an e-mail message, an instant message, a text message or a facsimile.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of creating a registration section further comprises requiring the vendors to provide a preferred contact method that the buyer will use for electronic notification purposes, and wherein the preferred contact method is used to send a confirmation message to the vendors confirming

successful registration.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
creating an administration section that allows the buyer to organize information relating to the vendors, including the creation of mailing lists that are used to send the electronic notifications to the vendors, wherein access to the administration section is restricted to the buyer.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the buyer is able to add and delete information and pages to the electronic publication at any time.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein a single category or an individual item comprise multiple pages within the publication and the buyer is able to specify the order in which the pages are presented for viewing.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the publication comprises a home page and multiple other pages, and all of the other pages include a link that will return the vendors to the home page.
11. An electronic publication for publishing a buyer's requirements that provides vendors with information needed to do business with the buyer and that can create individual lines of communication between the buyer and the vendors, wherein the electronic publication reduces an amount of paperwork and time required by the vendors to conduct business with the buyer, the electronic publication comprising:

a categorized posting of the buyer's requirements, wherein the categories are easily recognizable to the vendors, and further wherein each category includes one or more items required by the buyer, an item being either a product or a service required by the buyer;

multiple fields for each item within the categories, wherein the multiple fields include a name, a description, a contact person and one or more relevant dates relating to the item, wherein the contact person has knowledge of the item and a name of the contact person is presented as a hyperlink to an e-mail account of the contact person;

all forms and information necessary for the vendors to conduct business with the buyer, including a requests for information form, and quotes and proposal forms, wherein the forms are presented in a format that allows editing of the forms by the vendors and submission of edited forms to the buyer electronically; and,

a registration section that allows the vendors to register with the buyer, wherein after registration the vendors can receive electronic notifications concerning any item specified by the vendors during registration.

12. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the publication is accessible to the buyer and the vendors and further wherein the buyer is able to update the description of any item and the forms necessary for the vendors, at any time.

13. The electronic publication of claim 11, further comprising:

one or more drawings, figures or pictures for viewing and possible downloading by the vendors, wherein the drawings, figures and pictures aid in

conveying the buyer's requirements to the vendors.

14. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the categories of the buyer's requirements include construction, services and supplies.

15. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the electronic notifications received by vendors comprise an e-mail message, an instant message, a text message or a facsimile.

16. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the registration section leads the vendors through a registration process that includes requesting a preferred contact method from the vendors that the buyer will use for electronic notification purposes, and wherein the preferred contact method is used to send a confirmation message to the vendors.

17. The electronic publication of claim 11, further comprising an administration section that allows the buyer to organize information and forms received from the vendors including the ability to create vendor mailing lists, wherein access to the administration section is restricted to the buyer.

18. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the buyer is able to add and delete information and pages to the electronic publication at any time.

19. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein a single category or a single

item comprises multiple pages and the buyer is able to specify the order in which the pages are presented to the vendor.

20. The electronic publication of claim 11, wherein the publication comprises a home page and multiple other pages, and all of the other pages include a link that will return a viewer to the home page.